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of all Time



NEVER ANYTHING LIKE IT



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Brings Mother Goose
to "Life"

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Circle of Death

THE HATED HER CRIPPLED HUSBAND AND WANTED HIM OUT OF THE WAY! AND SHE HAD NUST THE PLAN — BURE-FIRE, FOOLPROOF, THE PERFECT MURDER! WHEN IT CAME TO CUTTING UP A BODY, IRMA WAS A SPECIALIST WITH LOTS OF EXPERIENCE, BECAUSE USING A SCALPEL WAS HER JOB! BUT IRMA FORGOT ONE IMPORTANT THING, THAT SOMETIMES THE SIMPLEST THINGS CAN TRIP A KILLER, AND MURDER IS NEVER THE SAFEST OF OCCUPATIONS! SO, IN THE END, THE JOKE WAS ON IRMA AS FATE LAUGHS LAST...











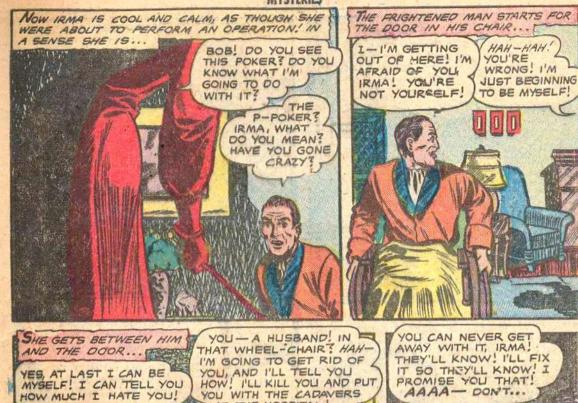












AT THE HOSPITAL!

NEAT, EH?

H-HATE ME! B-BUT YOU LOVE ME -I'M

YOUR

HUSBAND!















THEY'RE STILL AT IT! FOOLS! BUT IT'S GOT TO BE DONE AND I DON'T DARE DO ANYTHING TO MAKE THEM SUSPICIOUS! BUT IF ONLY THEY WOULD HURRY!

THE OFFICE!

HUH? OH,

THANK YOU,

JOE! I'LL

BE RIGHT

THERE!

TELEPHONE

FOR YOU, MRS. GRANT!

RMA ANSWERS THE PHONE - BUT WHEN SHE RETURNS SHE SENSES SOMETHING WRONG...

WELL, WHAT IS IT? WHY ARE YOU ALL STARING AT ME LIKE THAT? WHY AREN'T YOU AT WORK? WE, ER, WE FOUND SOMETHING!

THAT'S WHAT HE MEANT

GET AWAY WITH 17

H-HE'S WON AFTE

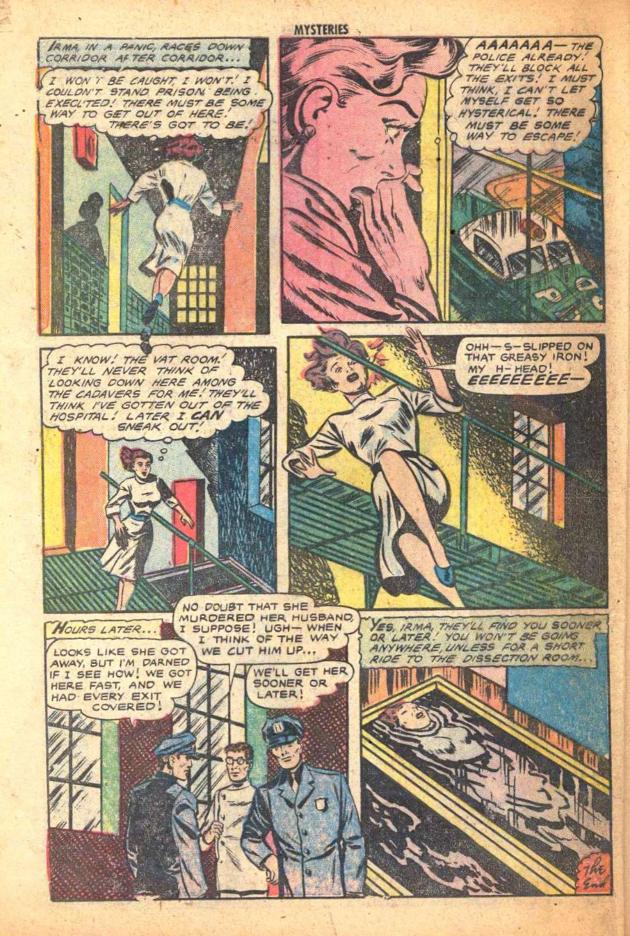


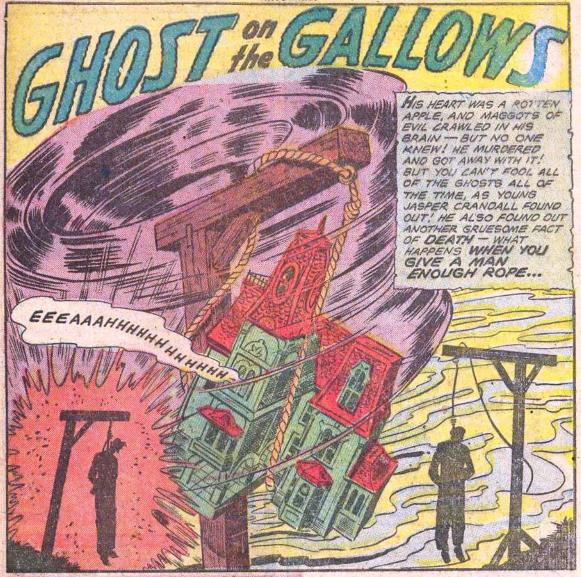
ALL! AND I'VE GOT
TO GET OUT OF
HERE!

DCG!

MRS. GRANT
COME BACK!
THE POLICE
WILL WANT TO
TALK! TO YOU!

SHE CAN'T









































LEAVE THIS PLACE! THIS

GALLOWS' GROUND! HEEHEE-HEE! THEY'LL HANG
YOU, THE WAY THEY HANGED
ME! I—HAH-HAH—WAS
THE HANGMAN, BUT THEY
HANGED ME, TOO! ON THIS
VERY SPOT! AND YOU'RE
A HANGMAN! I KNOW—I
KNOW! EEE—HEE-HEEE!



WE KNOW — WE KNOW EVERY-THING! I'M THE GHOST OF THE HANGMAN, ZACHARY CRANDALL, AND I WARN YOU TO LEAVE THIS HOUSE! THIS HOUSE BUILT ON CURSED GALLOWS GROUND!



BUT AS THE GHOST OF OLD ZACHARY VANISHES, JASPER CRANDALL SEES, SHADOWS CLOT AND FORM ON THE WALL! A CHILL WIND OF TERROR BLOWS DOWN HIS CRAVEN SPINE...



A STRANGE IMPULSE, LIKE A MAGNET OF FATE, DRAWS CRANDALL TOWARD THE WALL WHERE THE DREAD SHADOWS CAVORT ...











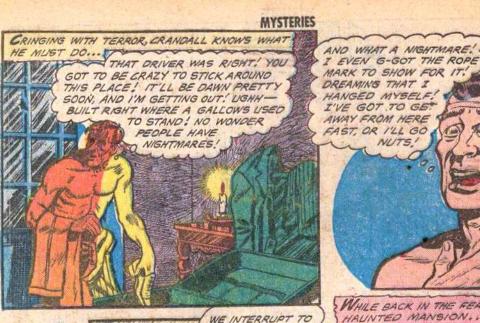










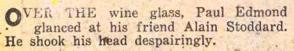








By JOHN MARTIN



"I'd rather marry a snake than Joyce Fabreau," he said slowly.

"I don't intend marrying her at all," Stoddard said, smiling. Then he frowned. "But look, Paul, I don't understand. What's wrong with her?"

Edmond stared pensively into his wine.

"She's probably the most dangerous woman in the city," he said.

"Dangerous?"

"Deadly." Edmond's voice had the dull ring of iron. "I wouldn't fool with her, Alain. She's deadly when she's crossed." He frowned. "The trouble is she's weird," he faltered.

"Weird?" Stoddard's voice was full of scornful humor. "There's nothing weird about Joyce. She's one of the most charming . . ."

"The eye of a reptile can charm," Edmond interrupted. "It can paralyze — and kill." He broke off again, seeming to remember something and then he shuddered. " lived for years in Haiti, you know."

"You're not suggesting she's some kind of zombi, are you?" Stoddard joshed. He laughed loudly. "Or maybe a witch? Perhaps I ought to ask to see her witch's diploma. Maybe you get one automatically after living a number of years in Haiti!" Again he laughed.

But Paul Edmond didn't smile.

"You said she was dangerous, deadly," Stoddard said. "Woman is traditionally the deadly sex. But Joyce Fabreau! What's wrong with her? She's cultured, quiet. I'll grant you she's nothing much to look at, but..."

"A woman scorned . . . "Edmond interrupted, musing.

"Scorned?" Alain Stoddard glanced at him quizzically.

"There were three men interested in her at one time or another. Interested more in her money, probably. Somehow, I think, she found them out."

"30?"

Paul Edmond downed his wine and shivered.

"They all disappeared," he said.

"Disappeared? You say it as though you meant they were dead." Stoddard sat bolt upright in his chair. "But if they died, then Joyce is a murderer." He paused. "Paul, this is nonsense! She's never been tried for murder!"

Paul Edmond nodded.

"I didn't say they were dead," he said.
"I don't even know if they are."

EDMOND SHOT a narrow glance at Alain Stoddard. "I just said they disappeared. One after the other. No one's seen them since. And the one common factor among the three was that they had their eyes on Joyce Fabreau's money." He chuckled hollowly. "One was a rich man, who wanted more. One was a poor man who wanted to be rich. And the third was a beggar with his eyes on the stars..."

"The trouble was," he continued, "that all three wanted her money. And somehow she found out." He picked up his coat, put it on. "Thanks for the wine, Alain," he said. "And take my advice. Drop Joyce Fabreau." He paused. "She's poison, pure poison."

Poor Paul, Alain Stoddard thought, as the door of Stoddard's apartment closed behind Paul Edmond. He was wide of the mark. It wasn't Joyce Fabreau's money he wanted. To get that he would have to marry her. And marrying a woman without any looks at all was too high a price to pay for cheap comforts.

But her jewels. . .

It had been easy to flatter the lovestarved woman, gain her confidence by promises. He had, of course, lied to Paul, for marriage he had already promised to Joyce Fabreau. And, in return for promises —the key to her apartment. It rested in his pocket.

And now an end to poverty, to shabby clothes. His plans were made. His passport was in order. Tonight he'd burgle her apartment as she lay sleeping. By morning he'd be far out over the Atlantic, on his way

to Holland. And in Amsterdam there were men who paid great sums for diamonds, rubies, emeralds.

Swiftly, he dressed, an odd little jingle running through his mind: Rich man, poor man, beggarman, thief; doctor, lawyer, Indian chief. The first three had paid court to Joyce Fabreau - and, unaccountably, vanished. He wondered where. Very likely just gossip, he decided.

And now there would be the fourth. Himself—the thief. He smiled as he put on his homburg hat, closed the apartment door behind him.

OUTSIDE, Stoddard hailed a taxi, gave Joyce Fabreau's address. She'd be asleep now, he knew. But he would achieve his objective, of that he was certain. All he had to do was turn a small key in a lock, enter her bedroom and extract her jewels from the jewel case on her dresser. Of course, gaining the bedroom would mean passing through the long foyer hall that held the Haitian wood sculptures and paintings she had brought back from Haiti, finally the room that held her collection of dolls. It was a weird, unsettling place, he remembered, a little macabre. He shrugged.

The taxi left him off in front of the twostory house Joyce occupied just off the park. He glanced at his watch as he took out the doorkey. The tree-shaded street reflected no noise. Softly the key turned in the lock. An instant later, the door closed behind him and he stood there, breathing heavily, listening for the slightest noise.

Then he hurried down the foyer hall toward the stairs and her bedroom. The huge Haitian idols lining the hall gaped, grinning mirthless laughter.

Past the room with the dolls he could see the open door of her bedroom. He paused, hesitating in the eerie, shadow-lit halflight of the hall.

And then he stepped into Joyce Fabreau's boudoir.

Her regular, even breathing told him she was asleep. On a huge, carved dresser he saw the jewel-box gleaming. Just a few feet more now, he thought, and everything he'd ever wanted would be his.

"Damn!" his outery was involuntary. He had stumbled against a large brass gong constructed in the shape of a death's head. Its soft, muffled sound reverberated like a hammer of doom. At the dresser, he reached for the jewel-box.

"Alain . . . ?" It was her voice, suddenly,

sleepy, questing.

STODDARD whirled, one hand thrusting necklaces and rings quickly into his pocket. Then blood suffused his cheeks as a light snapped on and he saw her lying there, looking at him, her lips trembling.

"Everything you promised me-lies." she began. "All you wanted was my jewels—not my love." Her voice broke.

"I'll have to tie you up now-you know that, don't you?" he said, and crammed the last of the jewels into his pockets. "I'm sorry, very sorry, Joyce. Believe me, the last thing in the world I'd wanted was to really hurt you."

"One last drink, then, Alain," she said. getting up and going to a decanter. She poured something from a decanter. "Here's luck, Alain!"

He tossed off the drink quickly, then he looked at her, surprised.

"It was your toast-but you're not drinking!"

The dark pools of her eyes glittered sardonically as he picked up the cord from her houserobe to tie her with. He took a step toward her, faltered. A sharp pain shot through his body-all of it.

"Drugged-you've drugged me!" he muttered thickly, in fright.

"There were others, Alain, as foolish as you. All three betrayed me. I'd hoped you wouldn't. But now you'll join chem.

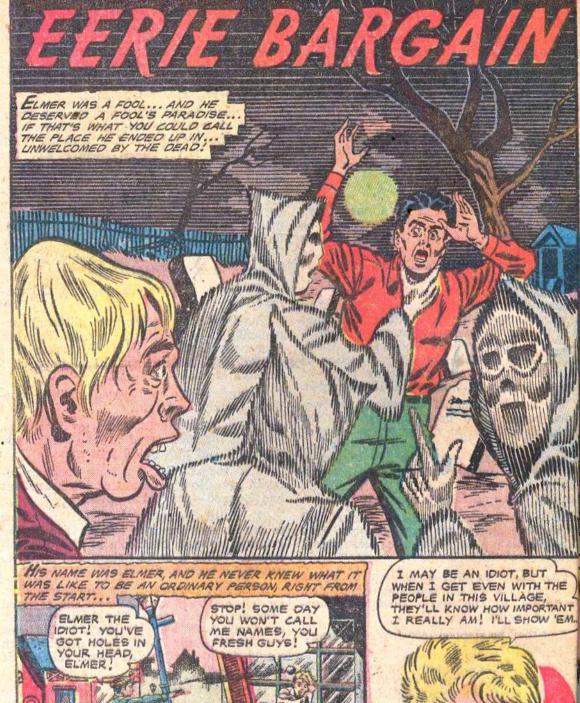
"Join them?" His legs were buckling beneath him. He could feel that his heart-beat had stopped-and yet he lived,

"In Haiti, the mameloi women know how to punish enemies who betray them!" She gestured toward the room of the doll collection. "With a swift poison and spells to contract a body to doll-size!"

In agony, paralyzed, his bones cracking, he felt his body shrink. Now she towered over him like a giant. The room was an enormous cave over his head. In his eyes was the hope for death, quick death. Death would defeat her yet, he knew, rob her of her full revenge.

"You won't escape, Alain," she said. She pointed to the dolls, to the rich man; to the poor man; to the beggarman. "They can hear us, Alain, see us; they can feel the pain they died in. In their doll bodies their souls live, as will yours, to feel my hatred, to remember regrets-to experience the agony that will endure forever!".

And muttering spells, she picked up the tiny doll that had been Alain Stoddard and put it in its place beside the others.

















MYSTERIES

ELMER COULON'T THINK OF JUST HOW TO MAKE THE VILLAGERS WANT TO BE HIS FRIENDS... BUT HE DID MANAGE, TO FIND PEOPLE WHO WEREN'T AFRAID OF HIM... IN THE GRAVEYARD... FOR ELMER HAD OBTAINED THE LOATHSOME JOB OF A NIGHT CARETAKER IN A LOCAL CEMETERY...

















I HAVE TO THINK FIRST ... YOU CAN GO OUT FOR TONIGHT ... BUT HURRY BACK ... I'LL HAVE TO LOCK YOU IN THE MAUSOLEUM BEFORE DAWN ... OR THEY MIGHT BEAT ME.



FOR SEVERAL NIGHTS, ELMER KEPT HIS WORD WITH HIS NEW FOUND UNTIL HE FINALLY DECIDED HOW TO PUNISH THE HATEFUL VILLAGERS .. THEN HE TOLD OF HIS DEMANOS, AND MADE AN EERIE BARGAIN ...







MYSTERIES















YOU... ELMER WILL LOCK YOU IN THE MAUSOLEUM FOREVER IF YOU DON'T DO AS HE ASKS! YOUR FREEDOM WILL BE GONE ... YOU MUST DO AS HE SAYS TO GET WHAT YOU WANT MOST ...





















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G-GOT TO GET OUT OF
THIS HOUSE! CAN'T STAY
IN THE ROOM WITH THAT
SWIMMING WITH
TERROR, SANORA
UNLESS I CAN GET
BOLTS FROM THE OFF THE ISLANO
ROOM...
SOMEHOW!









WEEKS NO # 98 MADE"SAD





AND I CAN PROVE EVERY WORD! JOE BONOMO'S SUPER SPEED COURSE SHOWED ME HOW!

T'S NO USE, MIKE. NOW
THE WHOLE SCHOOL
KNOWS I CAN'T MAKE A
SINGLE TEAM. I WISH T
I COULD MAKE THE
FELLOWS GO FOR ME
THE WAY EVERYONE GLAD YOU TOLD ME JIM. WHAT TOOK ME MONTHS AND MONTHS TO. FIND OUT 15 YOURS NOW IN JUST THREE WEEKS! HERE, THIS AD IS MEANT FOR A AD IS MEANT FOR GOES FOR YOU! h=



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WEEKS LATER ...

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